



State of Alaska;

Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic

Development; Division of Community and Regional Affairs

Introduction to Management for Rural Utilities Syllabus

Instructors
RUBA Staff

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Office Locations
Anchorage
Bethel
Dillingham
Fairbanks
Juneau
Kotzebue
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Course Overview

The course covers principles and practices for managing small water and wastewater utilities in rural Alaska. The instructors present eight lessons with topics that include an introduction to organizational, personnel, planning, operational, and financial management; the role of elected officials and the clerk. See “Course Content” below for details within each lesson.

The course is 32 hours long and can be taught online using a learning management system or in person at one of our office locations. If the course is taught in person travel scholarships are available for those who successfully complete the class.

Who Should Take the Course?

Municipal clerks, utility clerks, treasurers, bookkeepers, managers, administrators, chiefs, mayors, and council members who are involved in the managerial and financial operations of the utility. In the RUBA program’s partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation, water and wastewater operators can earn 3.2 core continuing education units (CEUs).

Operations and Maintenance Best Practices

The course qualifies for Operation and Maintenance Best Practices points used to determine eligibility and prioritization for community sanitation projects. Here is the link to more information about Best Practices.

[Operations and Maintenance Best Practices](#)

Homework and Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend each day, read lesson materials before class, participate in discussions and lesson exercises take a pre-test and post-test, and draft action plans to take back to their communities.

Additional Information

Here is the link to more information about the RUBA program, our approach to helping communities, and class offerings.

[Rural Utility Business Advisor Program](#)

Course Content

Lesson	Subject
Lesson 1: Introduction to Public Water and Wastewater Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Purpose of Public Water and Wastewater Utilities▪ Utility Management▪ Unique Challenges in Rural Alaska▪ Public Water Systems▪ Public Wastewater Systems▪ Regulatory Requirements▪ The Challenge of Sustainability▪ Resources

Lesson 2: Organizational Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level of Service ▪ Organizational Structure ▪ Roles, Authority, Responsibilities, and Accountability (RARA) ▪ Utility Ordinance ▪ Customer Agreements ▪ Public Relations ▪ Workspace Management ▪ Information Management
Lesson 3: Personnel Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Role of the Manager ▪ Personnel Policies and Procedures ▪ Safety Policies and Procedures ▪ Recruiting, Interviewing, and Selecting ▪ Orientation and Training ▪ Regulations and the Law ▪ People, Communication, and Conflict ▪ How to Motivate Employees
Lesson 4: Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Planning ▪ Identifying Needs and Goals ▪ Collecting Information ▪ Developing Alternatives ▪ Choosing the Best Alternative ▪ Putting the Plan into Action
Lesson 5: Operational Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with Operators ▪ Safety ▪ Data Collection and Reporting ▪ Operation and Maintenance Scheduling ▪ The Operator's Role in Public Relations ▪ Asset Management and Inventory Control ▪ Budgeting
Lesson 6: Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accounting ▪ Governmental Accounting ▪ Chart of Accounts ▪ Budgets ▪ Rate Setting ▪ Collections ▪ Financial Reports ▪ Managerial Reports
Lesson 7: Elected Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overview of Government ▪ Roles and Responsibilities ▪ Meetings ▪ Ordinances and Resolutions ▪ Policies and Procedures ▪ Financial Management
Lesson 8: Clerks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Municipal Clerk Duties ▪ Public Relations ▪ Meetings ▪ Office and Records Management ▪ Elections ▪ The Clerk and Financial Management ▪ Ordinances and Resolutions